Roxbury, March 26, 1874.

Dear Fanny:

As your letter of the 7th inst. contains the good news that you will all, probably, be at Rockledge in the course of another month, this may be the last epistle from your father that will reach you before your departure from Heidelberg. We shall, at least, look for guidance about this in your next letter.

Well, darling, you cannot come too soon to receive our loving embrace; yet, yearning as we are to see you and yours, we could be reconciled to your remaining where you are now till the middle of May, so as to be more likely to secure a more smooth and comfortable passage across the great deep than in April; for in the present weak and emaciated condition of your dear little ones, we fear it may go hard with them in case of a stormy voyage. How-

ever, nothing might be gained by delay, as an Atlantic transit cannot be reliably counted upon at any season as to storm or calm; and as Harry must be governed by business considerations and engagements, we shall hope that, whatever time you may embark, everything will go well with you to the end.

Of course, you will run some risk in bringing an untried German girl along to help take care of the children; yet how can you come without an assistant? It will be embarrassing to her and to us not to understand what is said by either party; and I should imagine that the children would learn from her a sort of patois that might prove more amusing than instructive. How I revolt at a confusion of tongues like that (so runs the legend) which commenced at Babel! You remember what my anxiety and terror were, on the Continent, in regard to being addressed in an unknown dialect. I have hardly yet got over the shock!

Whether you sail from Havre or Bremen, you will go to New York, as there is no steamer that sails directly to Boston from either of those ports. I shall hope to be able to meet you on your arrival, and to accompany you home. You will doubtless wish to take the earliest train practicable for Boston on landing, even if your luggage must follow afterward.

Speaking of luggage, take care not to burden yourself with what may give you trouble or annoyance, or cause additional expense, at the N. Y. Custom House; and, therefore, do not think of buying dutiable articles for presentation to relatives or friends. In this economise to the utmost, as the expense of your removal from Heidelberg to Boston will be quite heavy. It will richly suffice to have you with us again, and presents can all be dispensed with. Large hearts and limited means demand careful expenditures.

I have just had a cabinet photograph taken of my face, which all pronounce the best yet made; and I would send one to you, were it not that it might fail to reach you.

I went, a few days ago, to sit for my photograph, where spirit impressions appear upon the negative, in addition to the face of the sitter. On the glass with mine appeared the likeness of Charles Sumner bending over me, with broken shackles resting upon my right arm! It excites a good deal of curiosity and wonder. The photographer did not know me. How you and Harry will smile!

Agnes, Charley, and baby Frank are down with the chicken-pox, accompanied with ulcerated sore throat, but are to-day somewhat better. Mrs. Hilton (Mrs. Cobb's sister) is quite ill with a kidney complaint. Love and kisses for you all.

Your ever loving Father.